



Proposed Land Acquisition/Airspace Establishment in Support of Large-Scale MAGTF Live Fire and Maneuver Training

Project Update Notice Number 8—February 25, 2011

**Marine Air Ground Task Force Training Command
Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center
Twentynine Palms, CA**

The Project Update Notices offer a focused way to provide easily accessible, wide-spread distribution of new Project information.

They augment the regular updating of key Project public documents carried on MCAGCC's Land Acquisition Study webpage.

Please see these other Project documents for an overview and key background information.

➤ **Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) Released for Public Review and Comment**

The DEIS represents a lengthy study of the environmental impacts associated with six different land acquisition alternatives, and associated Special Use Airspace alternatives, under study to meet Marine Expeditionary Brigade sustained, combined-arms, live fire maneuver training. The public will be able to comment on the DEIS and those comments will be evaluated and responded to in preparation of the Final EIS.

- The DEIS Public Comment Period runs from February 25 through May 26, 2011
- Public Review and Comment Meetings will be held during the hours of 5:00 – 9:00 PM on
 - April 12, 2011, at Copper Mountain College, Joshua Tree, CA
 - April 13, 2011, at Ontario High School, Ontario, CA
 - April 14, 2011, at Hilton Garden Inn, Mirage/Sahara Conference Center, Victorville, CA
- More details on the meeting locations and to where to send comments is on the project website set out below.

➤ **Marine Corps selects “preferred Alternative” in the DEIS**

Based upon the analysis of training requirements and the evaluation of the environmental impacts involved with each of the six alternatives studied (as well as the No Action Alternative), the Marine Corps has selected Alternative 6 as the preferred alternative.

- Alternative 1 is the alternative that best meets the Marine Corps MEB training requirement, but it has more environmental impacts than the preferred.
- Alternative 5 has the least environmental impacts, but it is the poorest in terms of meeting Marine Corps MEB training requirements.
- Alternative 6, while not the best alternative from either an operational perspective or an environmental impacts perspective, is the optimal alternative given both the operational and environmental impact factors considered together. (Alternative 6 was developed in response to public comments during the project's Scoping Phase and was designed to provide access to important public off-road recreation areas during periods when MEB training did not require use of the land. Public safety management programs would allow for reopening part of the acquisition area once the twice-annual MEB exercises were completed, allowing approximately 10 months a year of access to the public.)

➤ **Future Significant Project Milestones:**

- Publish Final EIS and review of public comments – December 2011
- Publish Record of Decision (ROD) – April 2012
- If ROD determines to pursue land acquisition and air space establishment:
 - Congressional action on request for public land withdrawal for military training
 - FAA formal processes and actions on Special Use Airspace proposal request

For Further Information Please Contact

29Palms Training Land/Airspace Acquisition Project

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